



**REMARKS BY THE MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC  
WORKS: HON DANIEL GARWE**

**ON THE OCCASION**

**OF THE**

**ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE  
FOR DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT**

**27 NOVEMBER 2024**

**VICTORIA FALLS, ZIMBABWE**

The President of the Republic of Zimbabwe and Chairperson of SADC, His Excellency Cde. Dr. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa;

The Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Honourable General (Rtd) C.G.D.N. Chiwenga;

Honourable Ministers;

Senior Officials from SADC Member States;

SADC Deputy Executive Secretary for Regional Integration, Ms. Angèle Makombo N'tumba;

SADC Humanitarian Emergency Operation Centre (SHOC);

SADC DRR Unit;

SADC Secretariat Staff;

International Cooperating Partners here present;

African Risk Capacity (ARC);

Regional Anticipatory Action Working Group (RAAWG);

African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development (ACMAD);

Partners from the Media;

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It gives me pleasure and honour to welcome you all at this momentous occasion where we are gathered for this 5<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting of SADC Committee of Ministers Responsible for Disaster Risk Management. As you may be aware, Honourable Ministers, indeed, trends indicate that both natural and human induced disasters are increasing in both intensity and complexity posing humanitarian challenges all over the World and the SADC Region has not been spared.

Of late we have witnessed the Region being affected by a plethora of threats of both natural and human induced origin. The occurrence of these disasters has taken an upward trajectory both in frequency and severity and there is no doubt that climate change is taking its toll. This increasing frequency of disasters, pose significant threats to the well-being of our communities, jeopardising the region's developments.

**Esteemed delegates,** you are aware that in 2019 Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi experienced one of the most devastating cyclonic events which left scores of people dead and a significant number homeless. Critical sector such as Health, Education, Energy, Communication and Transport among others were crippled requiring a multi-sectoral intervention to reconstruct

and rehabilitate the damaged infrastructure. In 2023, Malawi and Madagascar were hit by Cyclone Freddy which caused a lot of infrastructural damages and left a trail of destruction of properties leaving many people dead and others homeless or injured.

In January 2024 Tropical Cyclones Gamanek, Filipo and Belal passed through Mauritius and Madagascar bringing with them heavy rains and strong winds that resulted in loss of lives, displacement of people and damage to infrastructure and property.

**Honourable Ministers,**

As the affected Member States are still grappling with the residual effects of these devastating catastrophes, our Region was also affected by the 2023/24 El-Nino induced drought. You may recall that the SADC region is currently in a declared state of disaster and implementing the SADC Regional Humanitarian Appeal in Response to the El Nino-Induced Drought and Floods launched on 20 May 2024. The drought has affected an estimated 59 million people in the Region negatively impacting lives and livelihoods and negatively impacted critical sectors of our economies.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,** as you are aware, Zimbabwe recently assumed the Chairmanship of SADC hence it is incumbent upon the current Chairperson, His Excellency Dr E.D. Mnangagwa to spearhead all developmental issues as well as tackling the effects the current El-Nino induced drought in our Member States. We are

urged to harness our National and Regional efforts to manage disaster risk, continue to improve on Disaster Risk Reduction capacity and raise awareness to risk and strengthen preparedness.

**Ladies and gentlemen,** allow me to point out that disaster risk reduction issues have become a pressing international agenda with recognition that efforts to reduce disaster risks must embrace climate change and be systematically integrated into policies, plans and programming for sustainable development. Indeed, if disaster risk reduction is not prioritised at the highest echelon, all our endeavours in achieving Sustainable Development Goals will go to waste as disasters can divert our development resources towards humanitarian assistance.

On that note, investment in resilience projects such as irrigation schemes, water harvesting techniques, livelihood diversification programmes, rural industrialisation projects among others is key as we journey towards achieving a disaster-proof region. As we discuss throughout this important gathering, let us remember that all our effort should be aimed at **“Leaving no one and no place behind”** as espoused by The SADC Chairperson, His Excellency Dr. E. D. Mnangagwa.

**I thank you.**